

LABOUR MONTHLY

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

ALL OUT FOR JULY 5th R.P.D.

and

NOTES OF THE MONTH

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LIGHT ON THE CHINESE PUZZLE
I. Epstein

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C. D. Lovrin

TORTURE IN ARGENTINA
John W. White

BOOK REVIEWS
By J. B. S. Haldane and others

ALL OUT
FOR
JULY 5th

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The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

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ALL OUT FOR JULY 5th

As we go to press the announcement is issued of Mr. Churchill's election ultimatum and of the Labour Party Conference decision.

All democratic and progressive opinion will wholeheartedly acclaim the firm and united determination of the Labour Party Conference to stand up to the blackmail of the Tory wirepullers' snap election threat.

Like snow in July, Mr. Churchill's previously expressed scruples against the indecency of a snap election being taken in the midst of the atmosphere of victory, before adequate registration or opportunity for the servicemen to be in touch with the issues, has melted before the ardent pressure of the machine managers of Toryism, those old and by now notorious adepts in electoral manoeuvres.

It is essential that the public should not be deceived by the transparent pretence of high "national" considerations governing this sudden election decision. The true facts are inescapable.

In all his previous speeches touching on the election Mr. Churchill had laid down two principles. First, that the election should follow after victory over Nazism in Europe and not wait for the unknown date of victory over Japan:—

I am clearly of opinion that the coalition of parties ought not to be broken before Nazism is broken. (Speech of October 31, 1944.)

Second, that the election following victory over Nazism should not be a sudden snap election, as in 1918—the notorious example of a post-war snap election, which Mr. Churchill in his writings has roundly condemned, while admitting his joint responsibility at the time that he "swam with the stream" in accepting it.

I cannot conceive that anyone would wish that that election should be held in a violent hurry or while we were all rejoicing together. There must be an interval. . . .

Nothing would be more shameful or more dishonourable than to deny the great mass of the soldiers and servicemen of the Air and of the Navy a full opportunity of recording their votes. (Same Speech.)

He went on to suggest that "it may be taken as certain that from the moment the King gives his assent to dissolution, a period of between two and three months would be required."

Mr. Churchill's ultimatum of May 18 transgressed both principles. On the one hand, he offered the alternative of postponing the election until after victory over Japan. On the other hand, he offered the alternative of the snap election. The only alternative he ruled out was the election following victory over Nazism, but after a decent interval to allow of adequate registration of voters and presentation of the issues.

The contradiction between the previous speeches and the present decision is so glaring that the conclusion is inescapable. In the interval

took place a surrender to the more astute and unscrupulous Tory party managers who wanted a snap election to cash in on victory, as in 1918. Once again Mr. Churchill "swam with the stream," as he confessed that he did in 1918. The obviously unreal proposal to postpone the election until victory over Japan, and substitute a referendum, was evidently only invented as a last-minute device to cover up the decision for a snap election, and endeavour to throw the responsibility on the Labour Party.

The dissenting replies from both the Labour and Liberal Parties have made clear that the decision for the snap election is not a national decision, but a Tory manoeuvre.

The date of the election, however, is no longer the important issue, once the decision has been reached. Everything now turns on speediest mobilisation for the election.

Already the spirit and enthusiasm of the Labour Party Conference has demonstrated the temper which animates the organised labour movement and the masses of the people to make the outcome of this momentous election an overwhelming popular victory over Tory reaction.

It is to be regretted that the close vote on progressive unity just fell short of the narrow necessary margin which would have established progressive unity and thereby guaranteed the result of the election. The Gallup poll preceding the Conference had already revealed that 55 per cent. of the electorate would vote for a Popular Front. The height of the vote for unity at the Conference, coming within 95,000 of a majority, no less revealed the readiness of the rank and file, wherever there had been opportunity for previous consultation at delegate conferences. On this all-important issue the serious failure of strategic leadership of the Labour Party Executive has gravely increased the difficulties of the fight and furnished Toryism with its one ground of hope. Now, however, is no time for inquests. The fight must be fought and won, in the conditions as they exist.

In the spirit of unity the fight must go forward for victory over Tory reaction. The size of the vote for unity at the Labour Party Conference suggests that the Labour Party Executive should, even at this late hour, strive to take into consideration the powerful current of feeling which exists, and will grow, for unity, and at any rate encourage, or not disallow, such local agreements as may be reached. In every constituency every endeavour should be made to reach agreement and unity on the basis of combined support for a single candidate against Tory reaction.

This time Toryism must not conquer. In a recent speech the leading Tory Minister, Mr. Amery, has confessed that the pre-war Tory election victories were "disastrous for the nation":—

I regard the 1924 and 1935 Conservative victories as disastrous, both for the Party and the nation.

In 1924 we won our election on the Zinoviev letter, but we threw overboard all positive economic policy and left ourselves helpless in the face of the chronic evil of growing unemployment.

In 1935 we won on a professed support of the policy of sanctions against Italy, while disavowing any intention of rearming to face the inevitable consequences of driving Mussolini into Hitler's arms.

(Speech to the Birmingham Conservative Association, April 27, 1945.)

Never again. The victory of democracy in Europe must sound the knell for Tory reaction in Britain. The whole future of the people of Britain, no less than of Britain's role in the world, is at stake. The signals are calling for all-out effort to ensure a sweeping popular victory in the coming general election.

R. P. D.

May 22, 1945.

NOTES OF THE MONTH

Victory—and After

Henceforth the great banner of the people's freedom
and of peace among the peoples will fly over Europe.

—STALIN broadcast, May 9, 1945.

VICTORY in Europe has been won. We have now to complete that victory, and to reap the fruits of victory. Never again must fascism threaten the world. Never again must Europe live through those years of crucifixion when senseless democratic divisions and the insane hatred and fear of popular advance and of socialism and communism and the Soviet Union let loose the hydra of fascism and the ashes of destruction on its fair fields and cities. Never again must we in Britain go back to that evil era of between the wars when the blind reaction of selfish monopolist interests stifled the life of the people, spread unemployment, poverty and misery, and played into the hands of fascism and war. The path that led to Buchenwald and Maidenek must not be trodden again by mankind. The lives of millions have won this opportunity for the people. We who survive must be worthy of this opportunity.

The unconditional surrender of Hitler's armies is not the end, but the beginning. Already a thousand new questions are arising; and the decision on every one is fateful for the future. History teaches that the hour after victory is often more difficult and dangerous than the winning of victory. Victories, won with infinite toil and sacrifice, have been thrown away by divisions of the victors, by relaxation of effort or by infirmity and confusion of purpose. Decisions taken during these coming months, when the fate of nations is thrown in the melting-pot, will govern the future for generations. We shall need the firmest unity and inflexible determination to ensure that the great lines of policy agreed at Teheran and the Crimea are carried out. We shall need to ensure that victory is not dissipated through weakness to the enemy or differences between the allies. We shall need to ensure that liberation is not frittered away through wrangles on the mani-

fold forms of democracy and new expressions of popular freedom arising from the struggle against fascism. We shall need to ensure that the old black forces do not creep back in thinly altered disguises. Responsibility of political leadership reaches now its highest level.

Britain's Choice

Above all, in Britain the highest responsibility of decision arises, equally for Britain's future and for the world's future. In the solution of all the problems before the world today Britain has a most responsible part to play. The guilt of the pre-war years was a heavy one, alike for its cruel consequences for the people and for its no less ruinous consequences for the world. During the war the glorious role of leading participation in the great partnership of the free peoples for democratic victory brought new life, inspiration, unity and consciousness of purpose. Which way shall the path lead now? Shall it be forward in unity with the democratic anti-fascist peoples towards the new triumphs and conquests of peace and co-operation which victory has brought within reach? Or shall it be back go the old intrigues and manoeuvres, the bolstering of reaction, the restriction of the productive forces and panic fear of popular advance, leading to the inevitable outcome? The answer to that choice lies in our hands in the coming months, and especially in the near approaching general election.

Towards the General Election

The coming general election is not merely the sequel to victory in Europe. It is the essential means to the completion of victory. We want to see a new Britain that shall express all the new democratic awakening and aspirations of the people. We want to see a new Britain that shall be, no longer the policeman of the old order in Europe and the world, but the friend and champion of all the demo-

cratic and progressive forces of the world. We want that new Britain above all for our own future, for the pressing social, economic and political needs of the people. The time is ripe for great changes in Britain. For us in Britain the moment of decision is at hand. That moment of decision, when we can play our effective part to reap the fruits of victory and shape the future, arises with the approaching general election. The coming general election is the first trial of strength for the future.

"Hitler Goes, the Generals Remain" ?

After the last war Theodore Plivier wrote a book entitled: "The Kaiser Goes, the Generals Remain." Let us make sure that the new version does not become: "The Nazis Go, the Generals Remain." Public opinion has been disquieted, and justly disquieted, over certain developments of Anglo-American policy in Germany and in the international situation since the armistice. Of the circumstances accompanying the last days on the West, alongside the fighting in the East, culminating in the surrender at Rheims on May 7 and Berlin on May 8, with the hitch in the synchronising of V Day, this is not the place to speak, though much remains to be explained. But public opinion was staggered at the subsequent apparent recognition of the Doenitz Government (or "Administration") by the Western Allies, openly drawing its authority from Hitler, and led by a foremost War Criminal and prominent Nazi Minister; the continued tolerance of the Nazi radio broadcasting the policy of the alliance with the West against Bolshevism, and the transmission of the Nazi Foreign Minister's speech along these lines through the B.B.C.; the sumptuous reception of Kesselring, Rundstedt, Goering, etc., and high-level public fraternisation with these criminals; and similar manifestations of an apparent policy

of flagrant violation of the Moscow, Teheran and Crimea Agreements. General Eisenhower's rebuke to high American officials was welcomed, but did not altogether alleviate this concern, since it was directed only against certain injudicious public exhibitions of this policy, rather than dealing with the real problems of this policy. It became obvious that drastic steps would need to be taken to correct certain dangerous tendencies, and to ensure that the policy of the United Nations should be made effective.

San Francisco Warning

Concern over some of the developments in Germany, which suggested a considerable lack of hostility to fascism and militarism in certain influential quarters, was intensified by some of the secondary manifestations at San Francisco. It would be unjust to allow the inevitably confused impression from incomplete reports of the manifold discussions at such a conference to blind opinion to the great work which is being accomplished at San Francisco. In broad essentials it is evident that the plan for world security organisation is going through, and it is going through with the guidance and united leadership of the Great Powers, especially Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. This is a high achievement. But this united leadership has not been displayed on all issues. Too often the Soviet Union has been left alone to lead the democratic anti-fascist fight. Where this united leadership was lacking, the Conference has been at sea, and the resultant votes have been confused and divided, leading to decisions on secondary issues inconsistent with the purposes of the organisation.

Argentine Anomaly

Most glaring example of this was the acceptance of the Argentine. Argentine under its present regime is a fascist State. The very same press

organs, and official publicity in this country, which years ago suppressed the facts about the horrors of the Nazi regime in Germany, now, at the same time as they are publishing the facts and horrifying opinion with the pictures of Buchenwald, Belsen and Dachau, are at the same time suppressing the contemporary horrors going on at this moment in the Argentine. We print an account this month from a moderate liberal American journal on "Torture in Argentina," which provides the background to the San Francisco vote. Argentine was thus the test issue of the incompatibility of fascism with world security. Crimea set the task "to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and fascism." Secretary of State Hull justly declared in 1944: "Free Governments and Nazi and fascist Governments cannot exist together, because the very nature of the latter requires them to be aggressors." Yet, when it came to the vote, Argentine was accepted by 31 votes to 4, after democratic anti-fascist Poland had been refused. It is true that the bulk of the majority was composed of the Latin American block, marshalling 21 votes out of the 48 at San Francisco, or less than one-sixteenth of the world's population with nearly half the votes at the world conference, often exercised through far from representative Governments. But the stand of the Soviet Union against fascism was only supported by three States, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Iran. The votes of Britain and the United States were cast on the wrong side.

Mosley Let Loose

At the same time it was noticed that, while there appeared to be considerable delay in taking any harsh measures against fascist war criminals, there was conspicuous speed within a few hours of V Day in withdrawing 18B and announcing that Mosley and British fascism was at

liberty to resume its activities. Signs of renewed minor fascist activities, swastika painting and anti-semitism quickly followed. While it was natural that the removal of wartime emergency legislation should accompany the transition from war to peace, this did not mean that the necessity for the protection of democracy against fascism had disappeared or that victory in a war for the destruction of fascism in Europe should be celebrated by the legalisation of fascism in Britain. The Crimea Agreement laid down the task "to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and fascism" in the liberated countries of Europe. This is no less necessary for Britain.

What is Fascism?

For twenty-three years the fight against fascism has been in the forefront of international politics, ever since in October, 1922, the Italian king and army chiefs placed Mussolini in power. For twenty-three years the pages of the LABOUR MONTHLY have been occupied with the fight against fascism. The first article on "The Fascisti—Pioneers of Disruption" appeared in the LABOUR MONTHLY in 1922. The first warning on the significance of fascism for the labour movement appeared in these editorial notes in 1922. Now at last that unity of the peoples against fascism for which we have striven has been achieved and has won the victory. That unity has won an absolute military victory over fascist power. But it is still necessary to complete that victory by the final destruction of fascism, so that it shall never arise again. For this purpose there must be clear understanding of the character of fascism. The enemy must not be allowed to get away by a slight shift of disguise.

Heart of Fascism

What is fascism? Public opinion in the recent period has come fully to recognise the violence, barbarism and

bestiality of fascism. But it is not enough to recognise the violence and bestiality of fascism; it is necessary also to recognise its class basis. Our concern must be to extirpate, not only the symptom, but the disease. A frivolous school of political commentators used to try to describe fascism as a system of violence and gangsterism sprung out of the blue, without class basis, and tyrannising equally over all classes. This was always nonsense (servilely echoing fascist "classless" make-believe) as any concrete examination of conditions in Germany, Italy or other fascist countries has shown. Marxist political thinkers, who from the outset gave the most serious attention to the significance of fascism and the fight against it, long ago gave their definition of the true character of fascism. They defined fascism as the violent terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, imperialist and warlike sections of the monopoly capitalists. History has proved the truth of this. In Italy it was the Army chiefs, the big combine industrialists, the upper bureaucracy and Court circles which built up fascism and placed it in power. In Germany the General Staff, the Junkers and the heavy industrialists, especially of coal, iron, steel and chemicals, built up Nazism and placed it in power to rule on their behalf. Fascism and Nazism protected and carried forward the concentration of capital, especially in the hands of the great arms industrialists. When Alfred Krupp came over to the Western Allies a few weeks ago, he stated that his private fortune, as sole owner of the Krupps combine, was 160 million marks, on which he drew tax-free dividends of 6 per cent., or a tax free income of nearly ten million marks a year (which might well make the mouth water of the wealthiest British multi-millionaire). This elementary question of the class basis of fascism used to be a controversy of theoretical

importance. Today it becomes of very practical importance, when, in the hour of the break-up of Nazism, the main authors, creators and masters of the criminal Nazi system seem to deny their responsibility and escape their punishment, and thereby to maintain their power.

Militarism and Nazism

The German Great General Staff, the Junkers and heavy industrialists, the Doenitz and von Krosigks, the von Papens and Schachts, the Krupps and von Schnitzlers, the Rundstedts and Kesselrings and Keitels—these are the guilty ruling forces which made and maintained Nazism. The Hitlers, Goebbels, Goerings, Himmlers and Leys, were the limelight figureheads, raised from the gutter by the rulers above and drawn in as partners into the ruling circle to exercise terrorism on their behalf. Now in the hour of eclipse the real ruling forces come into the open and seek to take refuge with the Anglo-American High Command, to play on class sympathies and salvage their power for future revival. And their old allies, the Munichites, the cartel partners, at once respond, and seek to treat them as having been only technical "instruments" of the wicked Nazi rulers, who can be treated as scapegoats. Thus the old Munichite organ, the *Observer*, on the Junker Nazi Minister, von Krosigk:—

Gangsters cannot hold political power unless they find able technicians, the Krosigks, Schachts, Krupps and the generals to serve as their willing instruments.—(*Observer*, May 13.)

This exactly reverses the real situation and offers the alibi. It is precisely the power of the German General Staff, the Junkers and heavy industrialists, which must be broken if German fascism and militarism is not to arise anew in a fresh disguise. The Crimea decisions explicitly laid down:—

It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism. . . .

Break up for all time the German General Staff. . . .

Bring all war criminals to justice and swift punishment.

This inflexible purpose must be fulfilled.

Mr. Churchill's Broadcast

In this turning point of history, with the whole future of British policy following victory now brought to the anvil of decision, Mr. Churchill's victory broadcast of May 13 failed to respond either to the needs of the situation or to the outlook of the nation. Victory had been won by the United Nations over Nazism and fascism in Europe. In the midst of the elation following this joint victory disquiet had been aroused by reports of a new Darlanism gaining the upper hand in Western Allied policy, consequent divergences between the major Allies, apparent Western recognition of a Nazi War Criminal Government in Germany, leniency to war criminals, a tough attitude to liberation movements, etc. Public opinion looked to Mr. Churchill, who had so often in preceding years sounded the call to relentless battle against the monsters of Nazism and fascism, to proclaim now with unfaltering voice the agreed and pledged United Nations policy for the final destruction and extirpation of these systems against all pro-Nazi appeasement intrigues. Public opinion looked to Mr. Churchill as the responsible representative of the alliance of the United Nations to proclaim the indissoluble unity of the alliance against all reactionary disruptive manoeuvres.

A Lost Opportunity

Mr. Churchill's broadcast revealed that his mind was concerned with other preoccupations. His narrative of the war betrayed certain notable divergences and changes of focus, especially in its omissions, from his speeches

during the war, or from a balanced presentation. So far from stressing the unity of the three Powers leading the United Nations, he stressed the Anglo-American alliance in an exclusive fashion which savoured of isolationism ("the forces of two nations . . . it would be an ill day for all the world and for the pair of them if they did not go on working together and marching together and sailing together and flying together wherever something has to be done for the sake of freedom and fair play all over the world"). So far from emphasising the task of the final destruction of Nazism and fascism, the punishment of war criminals and giving full scope for democratic anti-fascist liberation, he judged it necessary to warn against "the words freedom, democracy and liberation" being "distorted from their true meaning as we have understood them," and continued:—

There would be little use in punishing the Hitlerites for their crimes if law and justice did not rule, and if totalitarian or police governments were to take the place of the German invaders.

The People's Answer

To this last the people of this country, as well as of the European nations, who fought to destroy fascism, might well answer: It would be of little use to promise to punish the Hitlerites, if in practice you set up in their place and protect a totalitarian Government of Admiral von Doenitz, the Nazi Junker von Krosigk, the Nazi Speer, or other Nazis and war criminals. It would be of little use to warn against the danger of "police governments" if at the same time you are engaged in establishing and maintaining by armed force a police government in Greece, based on quislings and collaborators, which could not last a day without external armed force, against the democratic movement of the Greek people whose heroism and sacrifice liberated Greece. It would be

of little use to be pledged to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and fascism in Europe, if at the same time Mosleyism and fascism is to be legalised in Britain. And it would be of little use to proclaim the responsibility of the partnership of the British and American peoples in the cause of world peace and freedom, if that partnership were to be falsely presented in isolation from the democratic world alliance led by Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States, together with France, China and all the United Nations, which is the indispensable bulwark of world peace and freedom and the pivot of Britain's foreign policy.

Which Way, Britain?

The future of Britain in world affairs, no less than at home, is involved in present political decisions. After the last war Britain under reactionary Tory leadership squandered victory, no less than it strangled economic development at home. German reaction and militarism, after having been defeated at the cost of millions of lives, was rebuilt with British and American aid, against the impotent resistance of France and in hostility to the Soviet Union. That suicidal policy was not only dictated by class considerations, through fear of the then rising popular movement in Germany and Europe, and antagonism to the victorious working class resolution represented by the Soviet Union. It was also dictated by the old-style balance of power calculations, which feared the supposed dominance of France in Europe and sought to rebuild Germany as a balance. The outcome of that suicidal policy was Hitlerism and the Second World War, bringing the closest menace of uttermost disaster to Britain. That deadly policy must not be repeated again.

Britain's Future

Today the foundations are strongly laid for a different policy and a differ-

ent and happier future for Britain. Those foundations are laid in Teheran, Crimea, San Francisco and Bretton Woods. Those foundations rest on the solidarity of the alliance of the United Nations, led by the triple partnership of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. They rest on the complete destruction of Nazism and fascism in Europe, and of the central base and spearpoint of world reaction, the Nazi-Junker-militarist combination in Germany, in the heart of Europe. They rest on full and unqualified co-operation with all the rising democratic anti-fascist progressive forces and Governments in Europe, and on world democratic co-operation for economic and social progress. The fifth column intrigues, backed by pro-fascist adventurers and refugees, who are seeking to spread their venom to undermine this policy, must and will be defeated and smashed; for their aims run contrary to the vital national interests of Britain in the post-war world. But in order to safeguard the victory which has been won, and to ensure the wholehearted fulfilment of this policy, it is essential that the

Government which holds power in Britain in these coming years shall correspond to this policy and express all the progressive forces of the people.

Time for Political Renovation

A great political renewal is needed in Britain. That is the task of the coming election. By the time these lines appear, the decision on the prospective date of the coming election, and the decision of the Labour Party Conference on progressive unity will be known. Whatever the date of the election, and whatever the decision of the Labour Party Conference on progressive unity, the governing task of the coming election will be to defeat Tory reaction and change decisively the composition of the coming parliament, so as to ensure that the Government which comes to power after the election shall be adequate to the great problems and responsibilities now before us. A political fight is now beginning which will carry consequences far into the future for Britain and the world.

R. P. D.

May 19, 1945.

Tory Election Tricks

by IVOR MONTAGU

WHAT are the policies with which the Tories intend to face the election? What are the policies likely to be put into effect if they win? These two things are not necessarily the same, and now that the election has been precipitated, they have become of first urgency.

Conservative policy does not yet exist in the form of a coherent and integrated statement such as has already been issued in turn by Communist, Labour and Liberal parties. The resolutions of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations Conference in March were disconnected and incomplete. The indica-

tions can only be pieced together from speeches and inferred tendencies.

Even the much-boomed leaflet of "twelve points" is deliberately so vague as to recall a South Sea Bubble prospectus. "5. A determined policy for full employment and a rising standard of living. 6. The recovery and extension of Britain's export trade." By "methods of the highest importance, no one to know what they are," one presumes.

One thing is clear. Tories of all stripes are beset with anxieties produced by by-election results, straw polls, M.o.I. snoopers. They expect a desperate struggle and they fear the

new electorate. The Tory Party is fighting for its electoral life and parliamentary domination. It has made a ruthless choice of battlefield.

Of course, the most will be made of Churchill as "War-leader." The chance will be demanded for the "Master-builder" — as Mr. Butler called him (March 14, 1945)—to be mandated to embark on "his latest and greatest work."

The past, the deadly, unwashable guilt of the Tory Party in association with the Nazi regime and with the traitors of all Europe, their responsibility as assassins of collective security, they hope to avoid. The sharp reply of Bracken to Bevin (April 9, 1945) was designed to secure this. In so far as Labour dares to raise the past—and the Tories count on the Labour leaders not to "recriminate"—they will counter with exploitation of Mr. Churchill's record and accusations that Labour was opposed to rearmament.

A variant angle of this last is the endeavour to make conscription an issue, which the Beaverbrook press has lately (May 13, 1945) seized on joyously.

But the main battlefield is "enterprise" *versus* "controls." Nine-tenths of the artillery is concentrated on it. Here all Tory wisecracks think they are on to a good thing. Witness the rage of Mr. Lyttelton (November 7, 1944) when Priestley, by a neat side-step, altered the chosen issue from "private enterprise" *versus* "public ownership" to "public enterprise" *versus* "private ownership."

The Tory machine, headed by Ralph Assheton, M.P., chairman of the Conservative Party, and Captain MacEwen, chairman of the Tory private members committee, agrees on this with Mr. Churchill's private election Brains Trust (Bracken and Beaverbrook) who are enthusiastic about it. The Tory Reform youngsters,

despite their policy statement of October 12, 1943, that there is a "broadening field for State ownership of certain monopolies and State direction of the main lines of production policy," follow tamely behind, as, when it comes to brass tacks, they can always be counted upon to do.

The actual formulation on this question is sometimes quite unexceptional. What Socialist would disagree either with Mr. Butler (March 2, 1945) calling for "the maximum individual liberty and the minimum State control consistent with the specific circumstances of the time," or with Mr. Churchill (March 15, 1945): "Control for control's sake is senseless"?

Mr. Churchill (same date) eloquently demonstrated the necessity for present retention of many controls and restrictions, Mr. Bracken has made the same acknowledgment, Mr. Lyttelton (November 6, 1944) has admitted the necessity for a measure of State control where taxpayers' money is used to assist industry. These are the qualifications with which politicians who may win the responsibility of administration endeavour to preserve an eventual free hand.

But the public campaign is being waged with utter recklessness of consequence, designed to exploit every little wartime discontent on the home front, and bracket these with sybilline forecasts of dire consequence from any form of national planning, national control or nationalisation.

Socialists are attacked as crazy theorists. More specifically Mr. Assheton, in every speech, declares Socialism to be, inevitably, totalitarianism. He thus at once identifies the war against Messrs. Attlee, Bevin, Morrison, as a sequel to the lately terminated war against Hitler—thus transferring Tory guilt as bloodstained accomplices of the Nazis in some sort to Labour shoulders—and turns the favourite Transport House weapon of

assault on the U.S.S.R. and Communism against itself.

Churchill warns (March 13, 1945) that opposition policy is "a system borrowed from foreign lands and alien minds."

Further, Assheton even explains that Karl Marx was a German, and Socialism is therefore a German doctrine, inciting hate against half the British nation and Britain's socialist ally in a single swoop.

In the pages of the *Daily Express* and *Daily Mail*, controls are pilloried with vulgarity and excess. But is their grossness more conscienceless than the polished Mr. Eden's attempt (March 22, 1943) to identify "hard work, courage, free enterprise" with the maintenance of capitalism, and to picture Labour's purpose as to force each British citizen to "conform to a common pattern," to become a "cog in the wheel of the machinery of state"?

The old unscrupulous fire-alarm that Labour control policy would result in inflation endangering wages and small savings, especially war savings, has been rung by Churchill himself. Eden, and, copying him, the Liberal-National Conference (wholly a Tory segment now) warn against attempts which Labour is planning to speed up parliamentary procedure as the removal of the last safeguards of liberty. Lyttelton (November 6, 1944) attacks trade unions as the "greatest vested interests," Bracken (April 9, 1945) denounces them as "restrictionist monopolies."

Can anyone doubt, whatever mental reservations Tory ministers as practical statesmen may entertain, what would be the consequences of electoral victory in a campaign waged on these passions? Especially where the real mind of the majority on which their government would depend is shown by the roar of applause and unanimous vote that at their Conference (March 14, 1945) greeted the resolu-

tion to take all controls off "as speedily as possible"?

Labour must not underestimate the stampeding power of this type of Goebbelsism, its appeal to a population strained with war and impatient of regimentation. The failure of the Australian referendum on extension of Federal powers to cope with the post-war transition, thumpingly sat on by the electorate despite the big electoral majority for Australian Labour in the General Election, is a warning of its effectiveness.

Detail proposals, industry by industry, or problem by problem, are lacking from the official Conservative side, though the "Tory Reform" group is quite glib with them. The general perspective remains simply that of an exact return to pre-war methods, the Conservatism nakedly described by Mr. Churchill (March 15, 1945); viz., making the country "again a going concern, paying its way, and standing on its own feet," only then deciding "its form and shape"; and by Mr. Assheton (April 23, 1945): the achievement of "full employment by sincere co-operation of capital and labour, not forgetting the claims of either," a result which Mr. Assheton has "faith" can be reached by "free enterprise."

The only definite prospect appears to be the lightening of taxation on big industry, forecast by Sir John Anderson in his Budget speeches, and implied by Bracken (April 10, 1945) when he ascribed the obsolescence of British industrial plant to past over-taxing company reserves and refusing depreciation allowances in taxation.

Even the positive and admirable pledge of Mr. Churchill (March 15, 1945) "that Britain's wartime increase in agricultural production would be even extended after the war" has been given no precision, Mr. Hudson merely promising an agricultural policy "in plenty of time."

These particular Tory policies must be gleaned from the conduct of the Tory party on post-war issues in the present Parliament. The whittling-down of the Beveridge social insurance plans, the abandonment of the subsistence minimum as a basis, the dropping of the word "full" in the schemes for employment, the retention of privileges in education for parents rich enough to buy them for their offspring, the hold-ups on land planning, the assassination of the Health White Paper, may constitutionally be the shared responsibility of both parties to the Coalition. No one will suggest they have been forced on the Tories against their will.

But most revealing of all in Tory policy is not something said, or even done, but something unsaid. In Parliament, and in international documents, Messrs. Churchill and Eden have expressed admirable sentiments on foreign policy: the necessity of the vital alliance of the three great powers; Anglo-Soviet and Anglo-American co-operation; the elimination of German militarism, etc.

These topics are never touched on at Tory political meetings.

The machine-men keep off them. Neither Churchill nor Eden breaks the silence. They know what subjects arouse enthusiasm among their followers, and what topics must be avoided if the Tory cohorts are to be properly rallied for the election.

There is one formula endlessly repeated about "strengthening the ties of Empire," and hearers are left to assume that the A to Z of foreign politics resides in that phrase. Mr. Churchill, after testifying to the indispensability of economic co-operation in the Crimea Agreement, turns to his Tory Conference—in need of an evangelistic speech on this subject, if ever souls needed salvation—with all his emphasis on the need for economic independence from "the favour or indulgence" even of cherished allies.

The kernel of the Tory Party still consists overwhelmingly of Munichites, bitter enemies of the Soviet Union, would-be fraternisers with the ex-Oxford graduate German "foreign minister," encouragers of the sabotage of the Polish fascists.

Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden learnt their lesson from the Commons Crimea debate. It was not the under-your-hat handful of opponents that counted, or the "to-zero" figures in the confidence vote, it was the tone of the speeches, the writing between the lines, the abstentions, headed by Captain MacEwen.

Almost before the ink was dry on the Crimea agreement on Poland, Mr. Anthony Eden had veered to the Right and was insisting that Britain would never agree to something that, in black and white, he plainly had agreed to.

There could be no clearer demonstration of the issues involved in the election, the disasters ahead if Transport House insistence on progressive electoral diversity should result in the slipping-in of a parliamentary majority of Tories. Churchill and Eden learnt just how few inches they could go and hold the machine's backing.

And, if a final lesson be needful, what clearer than the threat from Mr. Assheton to meet nationalisation of mines, railways, fuel and power with industrial paralysis of all Britain's national life. (April 22, 1945)?

"If, after the next General Election, we have a Socialist Government, we shall have experiments in State ownership which will not only prove failures in the industries in question, but will create such fear in all other industries that there will be a general paralysis of trade."

Win or lose the election, Labour cannot save the nation and the future without rallying the widest unity of the friends of progress to stand foursquare against its enemies.

Light on the Chinese Puzzle

by I. EPSTEIN

(Mr. Epstein was a member of the Press party that visited Yen-an in 1944. On this trip he represented a leading American paper and spent five and a half months in the Border Region and in areas liberated from the Japanese by the Eighth Route Army. Mr. Epstein has been in China throughout the war and, as a journalist, has seen every aspect of it.—ED. L.M.)

A READING of foreign comment on China during the first seven years of the Sino-Japanese war would lead one to believe that unity and democracy in that country were the concern of left groups alone. Since the summer of last year, however, these questions have become major issues of Allied policy—particularly of American policy, because China is an American sphere of operations in the blue-print of the Anglo-American effort against Japan. The meaning of this development is clear. Chinese unity has become an immediate military interest of such dimensions that a controversy over it can lead to the removal of an Allied theatre commander (General Stilwell) and to unprecedented diplomatic intervention (Ambassador Hurley's promotion of Kuomintang-Communist negotiations). That reactionary influences both in China and abroad have so far been able to prevent unity within the country and the implementation of the principle that aid from without should go only to forces in China fighting the enemy and in proportion to their anti-Japanese effectiveness does not affect this fact—and anyone who has been to China recently can testify to the impatience of American soldiers on the spot with the delay in drawing the necessary conclusions from it.

When America went to war with Japan she thought of aid to China in terms of the provision of arms and a covering air force for the Kuomintang's troops. Next came the discovery that training also was necessary, and centres were established, first in India, then in Yunnan and Kwangsi.

Then followed another—that the feeding of the army, a responsibility of the Chinese government itself, was so bad and so corruptly administered that without its thorough reform neither training nor arms would be any use. Although there was a sufficiency of food in the area, the U.S. army in Yunnan actually had to issue rations and subsidies to certain Chinese divisions whose battle-worthiness was a matter of extreme urgency.

By the time the American army was forced by events to direct its attention to the diversion of Lend-Lease supplies to private purposes and civil war preparations, and to the fact that over half a million troops manning the anti-Communist blockade were not only being kept out of the anti-Japanese war, but receiving better equipment than the unfortunate "expendables" sent to fight it, the Japanese launched their first major strategic offensive since 1939. Their rapid success in occupying America's advanced air bases in China proved to the hilt that the Kuomintang's military machine had degenerated to the point of worthlessness.

It was during these months of debacle that an American Army Observer group, driven by the need of air-ground liaison with super-fortresses flying to bomb Manchuria and Japan, broke through Kuomintang obstruction to visit the Communist-led Border Region and Liberated Areas. Here they found something that they had previously thought existed only in propaganda—Chinese forces, sustained by Chinese resources, well fed,

with high morale, and not only fighting Japan but winning battles and recovering territory. With commendable frankness, the American government made the facts available to the press and public despite the fact that its own policy was thus laid open to criticism.

In this process of empirical education, the earlier discoveries tended to discredit the strongly-held conviction of General Stilwell that China still had a great military potential and that its development was an indispensable premise to victory over Japan. However, when the entire picture became available, his central thesis was completely vindicated. At the same time it became clear that aid had been misdirected and that while there was a way for *all* Chinese forces to become effective, this lay through political and economic reform. It was because Stilwell uncompromisingly followed the logic of this conclusion that Chiang Kai-shek demanded, and secured, his removal.

The Kuomintang armies had not always been so poor. We remember the heroic stand at Shanghai, the victory of Taierhchuang, the slow retreat to Hankow and other achievements of the period of greatest national unity in 1937-38. In many cases the troops that distinguished themselves at that time, such as those of General Tang En-po, were the same ones that six years later disintegrated at the first attack of the enemy in Honan in 1944 and fled across the province as an unruly rabble so hated by the people whom it was supposed to defend that they disarmed its stragglers and beat its wounded to death with flails. The troops of General Pang Ping-hsun had also been well rated. In 1943 he took 70,000 of them over to the enemy side to serve as puppets.

The deterioration, then, took place during the long stalemate which began in 1939, the period earmarked in

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's announced strategy of "exchanging space for time" for the building up of forces for the anti-Japanese counter-offensive. How it occurred can be judged by setting actual developments against the concrete tasks set for this period during the initial stage of the war.

The Military Contrast

The Program of Armed Resistance and National Reconstruction, passed at the Emergency National Congress of the Kuomintang in 1938 and endorsed by the Communist and other parties, promised an active military policy during the stalemate with the aim of mobilising the nation's manpower and passing gradually from tactical attacks within general strategic defence (war of attrition) to a general strategic counter-offensive:—

The army shall receive more political training. All able-bodied men shall be trained. . . . All people with arms of their own shall receive the support of the Government and shall co-operate with the regular army in waging guerilla warfare. The wounded and the families of the killed shall be pensioned and the disabled cared for; and all soldiers' families shall be treated with the utmost consideration.

In fact, the military policy of the Kuomintang troops on the regular front since 1939 has been a passive and "waiting" one—waiting for other countries to engage and beat Japan, and for Japan, in the meantime, to clean up the growing Communist-led forces. The only active preparations were for civil war—and this was the chief concern, not alone of the distribution of troops and supplies, but also of police measures and such "political training" as was given. As a result, "cautious" officers were promoted over anti-Japanese ones, soldiers were deprived of experience and enthusiasm, and "stability" became so sought after that local truces with the Japanese were condoned and

joint operations against "disturbers of the peace," such as the Communist-led troops, were not discouraged. Fronts became peaceful boundaries and garrison officers fattened on trade with the enemy, using their troops as porters to carry the smuggled goods. Commanders embezzled the pay and food allowances of the soldiers and the soldiers, in their turn, used the only capital they had—their rifles—to rob the people. When this situation finally ceased to suit the Japanese they had no difficulty in walking into territories in which a dog-eat-dog attitude between different ranks in the army and various groups of the population had long since succeeded the earlier spirit of anti-Japanese unity. The "defending" Chinese troops simply went to bits or went over, and individual units which did resist could not keep up the struggle because the fronts melted away all around them.

In the Liberated Areas, on the other hand, the military provisions of the Program were carried out. Constant offensive action was not only their sole source of arms supply, but also the only method by which guerilla pockets could keep the enemy tied down and prevent him from knocking them off one at a time. Promotion was on the basis of proved ability. The economic side of army life—rations and quartermaster supplies—was looked after by democratic committees in each unit on which officers and men sat on equal terms. Political education concentrated on the place of China's war in the world conflict and the duty of the troops to the people of the immediate vicinity. The peasants were both armed and encouraged to arm themselves, and auxiliary formations grew up around the army. Since the Eighth Route and New Fourth armies came to the occupied areas as forces of liberation patriots of all groups joined and helped them. These armies today have

in their ranks not only peasants and workers, but former students, regular army men, and even landlords and policemen. Economic assistance is given to the families of men serving not only in the Communist-led armies, but also in the Kuomintang armies.

The history of the Liberated Areas has been one of constant struggle and, with the exception of temporary setbacks, constant expansion.

Their population is now over 90,000,000 and the military formations number 600,000 regular troops, hundreds of thousands of guerillas, and 2,500,000 armed members of the People's Militia or Home Guard. Allied military observers are unanimous in considering them the best fed, best trained and hardest fighting forces in China.

The Political Contrast

The political paragraph of the Program states:

A People's Political Council shall be created. The ideal of local self-government shall be realised as soon as possible. Central and local government machinery shall be thoroughly reformed. Disloyal and corrupt officials shall be severely punished and their property confiscated.

The "People's Political Council" in Kuomintang China is an appointed body with advisory functions only in which the representation of opposition parties has been progressively cut down. The situation in local government can be gauged from Sun Fo's recent statement that in all Kuomintang China there is up to now not a single official of any grade who has been democratically elected. Corruption flourishes in high places and no traitor's property is as yet known to have been taken from him.

The sixteen anti-Japanese democratic bases established by the Eighth Route and New Fourth armies have elected governments of all grades from the village up, drawn from People's

Councils in which all legislative and executive power is vested. The number of elected officials is several hundred thousand. The policy of the Communist party is not to put up candidates for more than one-third of the seats in any elected body, as the maximum participation of all groups supporting the anti-Japanese war is desired. The system of local elections has produced a very great variety of administrative forms suited to the conditions of the various bases. Because the government in each place really answers the needs of the people this diversity has not prejudiced unity but, instead, strengthened it.

The governments are supported by an organised mass movement of Peasants', Workers', Women's, Youth and Merchants' Associations, with a total of over 15,000,000 members. These have no equivalent in Kuomintang China, although the "Program" there, too, calls for full mobilisation of the people.

The Economic Contrast

Finally, in the sphere of economic reconstruction, the "Program" says:—

Planned economy is to be put into execution, investments encouraged and large-scale wartime production undertaken. Village economy is to be developed, co-operative enterprises encouraged, the foundation of heavy industries laid. . . . Refugees and unemployed are to be relieved and trained.

The near-collapse of Kuomintang economy is known. Operating on the basis of an agricultural area, the Central Government has extracted taxes and conscripts from the village without in any way promoting production, and using the landlord as its agent. The outright expropriation of the peasantry that has resulted has alarmed even such organs as the right-wing Kuomintang *Commercial Daily News*, which wrote in its issue of October 31, 1944:—

The tendency to concentration of land ownership is an aftermath of the present war. . . . The buyers are landowners, capitalists, war profiteers and top political and military officers. . . . In Kwantung province there are now many landlords who possess 10,000 mow of land or more (*Central Daily News*, January 9). In Kwangsi land sales are so extensive that even many middlemen have become millionaires. A town head man in Szechuan confesses that he makes hundreds of thousands of dollars a year as a middleman on land transfers (*Ta Kung Pao*, July 25). In Yungteng, Kansu, there were no absentee landlords before 1939, but now 40 per cent. of the land has dropped into the hands of non-resident high officials, rich merchants and notorious profiteers. We thus form a mental picture of the situation of concentration of land in the hands of the few throughout the country.

The writer remarks that most of the land was sold for debt and quotes a survey of 20 villages which showed that only 300 of 1,107 of their farm households had succeeded in keeping out of the hands of usurers.

Another student finds differentiation of the peasantry far advanced in various places and quotes as an example the tobacco area of Nanyung, Kwangtung province, where the composition of the peasantry changed as follows:—

Year	Rich peasants, partly landlords	Rich peasants	Middle P.	Poor P.	Hired Labour- ers
1939	7%	12%	40%	35%	6%
1942	10%	18%	20%	42%	10%

Between 1941 and last year there were famines in Honan, Kwangtung and Chekiang which had been caused or aggravated by unrelenting taxation and conscription. Taxes and press-ganging of manpower were the motives for peasant revolts, some of large dimensions, in Honan, Kansu, Kweichow, Kwangsi, Kwantung and Kiangsi.

Industry, including war industry, suffered severely from inflation and

the flow of capital to land purchases, hoarding and speculative trade. The governing bureaucracy, itself linked with the landlords and speculators, did nothing to check this tendency. In the spring of 1944 alone sixty machine-shops closed down in Chungking and 3,000 skilled engineering workers became unemployed. China's pitiable steel production—10,000 tons annually—was declared "excessive and unprofitable," while at the same time steel was imported from America by air. Chungking manufacturers' associations bitterly attacked the government for its policy and industrialists are now very much at odds with the regime.

In the Communist-led regions the development has been the reverse. Elected governments in the villages, to which the enforcement of all laws is entrusted, have unseated the landlord politically. Rents have been reduced by 25 per cent. Taxation is progressive, ranging from five per cent. of the crop of the poor peasant to 30 per cent. of the rent income of a big landlord and direct requisitions by the army are forbidden. Agricultural production has been increased by easy credit to the cultivator and especially by a system of co-operative farming which, by saving labour, has made possible a great extension of ploughed acreage. Stationary army units and official personnel must cultivate allotments, lessening the grain tax burden on the people. Village handicrafts, also co-operatively organised, have added both to the goods on the market and to the peasant's income. The peasant is encouraged to buy land from the landlord by his own increased reserves and facilities for loans. The landlord is encouraged to sell by the fact that rent income is taxable, while industrial investment is tax free. Thus capital is diverted to industry.

The success of the Border Region and Liberated Areas in maintaining

themselves despite the double Kuomintang-Japanese blockade is sufficiently testified to by the surprise of foreign visitors to these places, formerly the poorest in China. They expected to find the "Communist guerillas" half starved and grimly holding on. Instead, they found democratic united front armies and governments in compact territories clear of Japanese, where the people worked more rationally and lived better than elsewhere in the country, the troops were in better condition, and the level of mobilisation was much higher. This had occurred despite unremitting and fierce warfare and the Liberated Areas were expanding.

After eight years of war in China the population under the rule of the Kuomintang in "Free China" has shrunk from 400,000,000 to perhaps 100,000,000, while the Japanese have 200,000,000, and the balance of 90,000,000—which the enemy also once controlled—now live in the liberated bases. Militarily, Liberated China has engaged as many as 60 per cent. of the total Japanese forces in the country. Allied military men regard the Eighth Route and New Fourth armies as the strongest in China, although their governments have not followed up the implications this holds for the war. The Chinese people have been able to see for themselves the respective results both of the defeat-breeding feudal fascist policy of the Kuomintang dictatorship and of the democratic united front policy of the Chinese Communist Party, which is liberating Chinese territory as the Kuomintang loses it, not only from the Japanese enemy, but from the age-old incubus of feudal exploitation. The demands for a democratic coalition government that come from ever wider circles of Chinese society despite the Kuomintang police terror, show that they are

not content with seeing. Instead of weakness, endless civil war, police government, and deepening impoverishment, they want victory to which their own efforts have made a major contribution, strength, unity, democracy and economic growth.

The ruling group in Chungking is still trying to fob off the people with

phrases while gambling on some "fortunate" international turn (such as a split among the major United Nations from which it hopes to profit). But the changed balance of power in China itself has already written the death warrant of the undemocratic dictatorship of the present ruling groups of the Kuomintang.

Mines Nationalisation in France

by CLEMENS DUTT

THE situation of the coal-mining industry in France is far from brilliant. This has to be taken into account in considering the results of the so-called nationalisation of the coal mines in Northern France.

France is poor in coal, though rich in iron. Before the war the maximum annual output was 50 million tons against a consumption of 80 million tons. Nearly 40 per cent. of requirements, therefore, had to be imported, mainly from Britain or Germany.

During the war period, with the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and the growth of the resistance movement among the miners, especially in the North, production fell steadily, until in 1944 the total French output was only 26 million tons. After liberation, the situation was worse than before. Much destruction had been caused by allied air bombardment. Apart from the decrease in the labour force due to prisoners or deportees in Germany, thousands more had joined the F.F.I. and had passed into the army. There was a situation of great tension, owing to the hostility of the miners to managers and overseers who had collaborated with the Germans and were still in leading positions. The miners continued to suffer from progressive exhaustion and ill-health, particularly owing to undernourishment.

What measures were taken to deal with this situation? In the first place,

the Provisional Government found it necessary to take under its own control the most important coalfield, that situated in the two departments of the Nord and the Pas de Calais.

These mines were owned by eighteen different companies which operated concessions from the State (it should be noted that in France the State is the owner of the sub-surface). In place of these companies, the government set up a National Coal-mining Administration (the Houilleries Nationales) for unified exploitation of the whole basin.

This is called nationalisation, but strictly speaking, the mines have not been nationalised, they have only been requisitioned. The shareholders have not been expropriated. The companies have not disappeared, but receive an indemnity of 8 francs per ton (based on the prosperous year 1938) as well as payment of certain interest charges on loans, etc., involving altogether a compensation of about 250 million francs per year. This represents really a rent for the use of the property. It is intended that a full scheme of nationalisation, which will deal with the rights of the property owners, shall come into force later on.

What have been the fruits of this "nationalisation" for the companies, the State and the miners themselves?

As regards the companies, they have not come off badly. If they had been

left to carry on alone, they would have been faced with a heavy deficit, as was the case during the war. Output then went down while costs went up, but the Germans refused to permit any increase in the selling price of coal. Consequently, the Vichy Government had to step in and provide a subsidy to make up the difference.

This difference has continued to grow. According to information given me at the offices of the Miners' Federation at Douai, the centre of the mining area, with the actual output at 60-62,000 tons per day, the production cost increases to nearly 800 francs per ton, without counting unemployment pay. Since the sale price is round about 300 francs per ton, the State has to pay out about 700 million francs per month to cover the deficit on the northern coalfield.

It should be noted that there seems to be some uncertainty as to the actual figure of the deficit at the present time. At the offices of the National Administration in Douai I was told that the government subsidy during the war was in the neighbourhood of 200 francs per ton. Since costs have increased, it would presumably be more now. On the other hand, a spokesman of the Ministry for Industrial Production, whom I questioned here, stated that during the war the subsidy was about 120 francs per ton and that it is "about the same" now.

In any case, it is clear that in taking over the coal mines of the North, the State has not taken over a going concern. It has to pay out such large sums in running the industry and compensating the coalowners that it is difficult to foresee a time when there will be a balance on the credit side.

Incidentally, I was informed at the Administration in Douai that auxiliary undertakings, such as chemical, gas and other works, have not been included in the nationalisation scheme even though the coal companies may

own them or have an interest in them. In contrast to coalmining itself, some of these may be very profitable.

What advantage, then, has nationalisation been to the nation? First of all, it has to be said that without it the mines could hardly have been got going at all, for both technical and psychological reasons. In regard to the former, in the conditions of breakdown it was essential that the eighteen different systems of exploitation, each with its separate administration, should be replaced by a single unified control. A single food service has been established for all the mines and a single selling organisation has been set up which handles the whole output. Formerly the companies worked so separately that an engineer of one company was not able to visit mines belonging to another for fear he might discover trade secrets.

On the other hand, the advantages of rationalised administration have not yet extended to any degree to production itself. The mines have now been grouped into seven groups for rational exploitation, but the effect of this planning will only be seen as new seams are opened up.

Very important, however, has been the psychological reason for nationalisation. It is not too much to say that the atmosphere of hostility in the coalfield between the miners and company managers and agents whom the miners regarded as traitors and wreckers was such at the end of last year that serious conflicts would undoubtedly have developed if the change had not been made.

The feeling that the industry is now being run in the interests of the nation and not for the benefit of private profit has been an important factor in making possible the intense efforts of the miners which resulted in the increased production this year.

But this increased production is due almost wholly to the miners working

harder, doing more shifts per week, under exhausting conditions of under-nourishment, etc., which is telling on the miners' health and cannot be indefinitely continued.

Further, the miners feel that they are not able to play the part they should in the control of the reconstituted industry. They have a small consultative part in the central administration, and joint pit committees have been set up for each mine, but that is all. Asked for his verdict, the secretary of the Miners' Union at Douai said: "It is nationalisation only in words. Naturally, the miners are glad that the principle has been accepted, but the present scheme has been set up without consulting the miners and with the wrong methods."

The main objections which he put forward were: the payment of compensation to the companies, the small role of the organised workers in the administration and the retention of the old management and its personnel in the various mines.

The last is a very sore point with the miners. As far as they are directly concerned, they say, practically nothing has changed. The same men are in charge, even men who openly collaborated with the Germans. I was told that there have even been cases of the continuation of Vichy methods, such as the punishment of compelling a day's work to be done without pay.

A number of "sanctions" have been taken against members of directing personnel whose cases have been investigated by the special purge commission set up for the industry, but in several cases its decisions have been rescinded by the regional centre. The chief sanction has been suspension from office for one to three months after which everything has gone on as before. Salaries have even continued during suspension, so that I was told some ex-collaborators even said to the miners: "Why haven't you brought a

charge against me, I could have done with a holiday?"

Naturally, the men working at the coalface do not feel that nationalisation, as at present conducted, has made any difference to them. Their immediate problem is food. I visited a smallish pit at Douai, employing about 800 workers, and found the miners bitterly disappointed at the non-fulfilment of what they considered were promises made over the radio that food supplies would be sent as soon as liberation took place. They told me that they get only 2½ ounces of fresh meat per week and only about 1 oz. of butter per shift. There has been no jam ration for weeks and hardly a dozen pints of wine in all the months since liberation.

Second only to food is the difficulty of getting soap. They are served with six tiny tablets per month of a soap that looks like clay or shale and which is not only ineffective, but rough and bad for the skin. Recently, however, Shaef has provided 15 tons of good American soap, but this was for the whole basin. Its distribution was undertaken by the Miners' Co-operative Society which was formerly controlled by the companies, but has now been taken over by the miners.

I spoke to a delegate of the pit committee. He was an older man who had been a political internee. He said that when he returned to the pit he was surprised at the exhausted appearance of his old comrades, they had not realised themselves how much they had changed.

The pit committee he regarded as one of the good features of the new regime. It consists of 28 members, including eight trade union representatives and eight elected directly by the workers. Among the remainder are representatives of the technical staff and management. I was told that the committee had settled disputes which might easily have led to a strike under

the old management, but the complaint was made that too often the workers' suggestions were ignored or even laughed at. There was also a separate committee for social services.

Asked their opinion of nationalisation, the miners here did not hesitate to say, in the presence of the chief engineer, that it could not be regarded as a real nationalisation and gave the miners only a consultative voice.

It is clear that the French coal problem has by no means been solved by the measures so far undertaken. The long-term advantages of unified control can only take effect as new seams are opened up and new equipment makes improved methods possible.

For the present, the central problem is one of food and living conditions, recruitment of workers, and tools.

There is grave danger that the present half-hearted methods will be used as an argument against nationalisation. Attempts will be made to saddle it with the responsibility for existing defects and deficits. Certain interests may even encourage these difficulties to furnish a weapon against nationalisation. It is highly important, therefore, that nationalisation should not become merely a device to make the State bear a burden which the coal companies are unable to bear, or an expedient which will be abandoned as soon as respects for private profit are restored.

India and the British Election

by S. A. DANGE

WITH the end of the war in Europe, finishing of the war in the East and peace-time reconstruction have become the centre of attention of the British people.

And in both these problems the political and economic deadlock in India occupy a very important place.

Progressive opinion in England and the world over realises the serious consequences of the suppression of the national organisations of the Indian people and the absence of a National Government.

The comments in the progressive American press, the articles in *War and the Working-class*, the statements of Molotov at San Francisco draw pointed attention to the situation in India.

The resolutions of the Labour and other progressive parties in England show that the people in England are slowly awakening to the situation.

The recent discussion in the columns of *The Times* and such other papers, concluded with *The Times'* editorial on

March 20 that "Britain's present reliance upon the Cripps' offer in a 'take it or leave it' spirit no longer suffices and is fraught with peril to Indo-British co-operation both during and after the war. There is a general conviction that it is for this country to resume the political initiative." These signs indicate that even sections of the Tory ruling-class are convinced that the solution of the Indian problem has become an urgent necessity.

Even sections of the ruling bureaucracy in India have been shaken to some extent from its die-hard position. It is of special significance that the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, came to England to have conversations with Churchill and Amery on the Indian situation.

And yet the essential features of the situation do not seem to be properly appreciated, and hence the solution of the Indian question is not yet in sight; because an insufficient realisation of the seriousness of the situation has led to the absence of any strong

pressure on the ruling die-hard circles.

The resolutions of the progressive Parties remain untranslated in practice, and the leadership is still able to by-pass action. Recently when the Labour leadership came out very sharply in the open against the ruling Tories on the question of post-war home policy, its declarations were void of a sharp indictment of the colonial and Indian policy of reactionary Toryism.

The tremendous victory in Europe and the retreat of Japan, slow but inevitable, hide the seriousness of the situation and help die-hard Toryism to lull people into complacency.

It is not yet fully realised here that the economic situation in India which had led to famine and collapse of production in 1943, remains *in essence* the same in 1945; and that the statements of the Government that they have been able to bring under control and stabilise the economic front are not justified by facts.

Food prices, as published in a "revised" form by the Government experts, show that they have been "stabilised"—but at what level? At the level of famine prices. The Food Price-Index, which was 195 in December, 1942 (1939=100), had risen to 243 in the famine year of December, 1943, and has now been "stabilised" at 231 in December, 1944. The working-class cost of living index, which had jumped to 236 in November, 1943, has been "stabilised" at 230 in November, 1944, without an equivalent rise in wages.

The inflation of currency continues to stand at the same height as before; and Lord Wavell, in fact, expected a further rise in inflation and consequent hardship for the poor, when the war against Japan would be more vigorously pursued.

Government has been unable to increase coal production because of its policy of satisfying the European

profiteers at the cost of the workers of the country; and industrial production has failed to catch up to its full capacity.

Bureaucratic schemes of increasing food production without enlisting the co-operation of the peasant organisations have failed, having brought hardly 2 per cent. increase in total yield after sinking millions of pounds in red tape measures." While industrial production is either stagnant or declining, the average net profits index was over 327 in 1943 (926 for jute, 392 for tea, and so on).

Rivalry of Anglo-American investors and the hostility to the growth of Indian industries is starving the country of consumer and capital goods and even of that industrial equipment that is needed to meet the demands of the front. These are the facts of the "stabilised" economic front.

It is not yet sufficiently realised here that whatever the differences regarding the future constitution of India amongst the different political parties, and especially between the Congress and the Moslem League, all are agreed on the incompetence of the present bureaucratic system. The picture of total disunity amongst the people, given as the main excuse for continuation of the deadlock, is not justified by facts.

Though the Gandhi-Jinnah talks did not reach a settlement on the question of Pakistan and the future constitutional make-up of India, the two have come much closer to agreement, thanks to the growing influence of the working-class in India. In the Central Legislative Assembly representatives of both the organisations have adopted a common attitude to the bureaucracy as a result of which the Government suffered defeat six times on the budgetary and other measures brought forward by it this year. Government was censured for

its policy of refusing to give adequate wages to the workers on the railways; it was censured for persecution of the poor peasantry for their inability to purchase Government loans for which they had neither money nor enthusiasm. When questioned in the Commons, Mr. Amery had to admit the defeats and say that they do not affect the Government, as it is not responsible to the Legislature!

Consumers, peasants, workers, students, women, are uniting to fight the hoarders and profiteers, while Government penalises the peoples' organisations, refuses to recognise them and aids the worst exploiters. Such are the facts of the growing unity of the people.

It is not sufficiently realised that the main necessity of the hour is not the evolution of clever constitutions for the future, but the formation of an all-party National Government that will take the country out of the morass. Hence the absence of an "agreed constitution" is no justification for continuing the deadlock. No country in the world ruled by an alien bureaucracy and divided into classes ever produced the miracle of an "agreed constitution."

The so-called solutions of the constitutional question by Zafrulla, Coupland, *The Times'* correspondents and recently the Sapru Committee in India do not carry the country forward to democracy in the future, as they leave the veto on progress in the hands of the British financial and Tory interests. Nor do they lead to a competent Government in the pre-

sent having the confidence of the people, as they have no backing of the major political parties. They just serve to befog the main issue and nothing more.

Finally, it is not sufficiently realised here that contrary to official propaganda, the Congress has showed its willingness to shoulder the responsibilities of running the Government of the country in co-operation with other parties by forming Provincial Ministries in the North West Frontier and Assam, and Mr. Gandhi has several times repeated his declaration that:—

"The obstruction of war-effort is a mere bogey. When the principal Congressmen are free, there will be a real national war effort in India if they are allowed to have an effective say."

Insufficient realisation of all these factors has kept the democratic masses in this country from moving its leadership to effective action, from fully appreciating the significance of Wavell's talks with Churchill and exerting their full pressure to demand the release of the Congress prisoners and immediate steps to reach a settlement with India.

Further continuation of the deadlock is not only dangerous to the lives of four hundred million Indians, is fraught with peril not only to Indo-British co-operation, but to the social and political security of all freedom-loving peoples of the world.

The election platforms of all progressive parties, now girding their loins for the battle against Reaction, must put India as one of the most vital planks in their campaigns.

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Rumania's Road to Democracy

by C. D. LOVRIN

A NEW life has begun for the people of Rumania. After centuries of suffering and oppression, after many years of struggle and sacrifice the people of Rumania have now, for the first time in their history, entered on the road towards becoming masters of their destiny.

The road to freedom and democracy was difficult and painful. For over three years Rumanian soldiers fought and died in Hitler's war against the Soviet Union, blind to the fact that Nazi Germany's triumph would have perpetuated and fortified the rule of Rumanian and German reaction over their people. But under the blows of the Red Army and the crushing weight of Antonescu's dictatorship this realisation dawned on many classes of Rumanians. The movement which originated in the awareness of the people that Rumania's further adherence to Nazi Germany must lead to national disaster and that they would have "to cope themselves with the task of their liberation" was led by the Communists and Socialists of the United Workers' Front which was born in the struggle against Hitler and Antonescu.

Thus the so-called *coup d'etat* of August 23, 1944, which resulted in the arrest of Antonescu and Rumania's adherence to the United Nations, was not simply a palace revolution. It was brought about by the whole international situation, military and political, and by the efforts of progressive Rumanians. Only when Antonescu's attempts, backed by Rumania's ruling class, to split the United Nations had failed, when it became clear that Britain and the United States would not strike a bargain at the expense of the Soviet Union, only then did the leaders of the Peasant and Liberal parties, Maniu and Bratianu, agree to

joint action with the Communists and Socialists. After the conclusion of the Armistice, which was signed in Moscow on September 13, 1944, Maniu and Bratianu reverted to their old game of trying to gain British and American support for their anti-Soviet and Communist-baiting policy.

During the following months Rumanian political life revolved round the fundamental questions of the fulfilment of the Armistice, the prosecution of the war, the punishment of war criminals and the purging of pro-fascists, and the introduction of overdue social reforms. The democratic parties of Rumania campaigned vigorously for the solution of these problems, but they were opposed at every turn by adherents of Maniu and Bratianu, who were joined by reactionaries from all camps of the long line of former Rumanian dictatorships. Under various pretexts all measures necessary for the genuine democratisation of the country were delayed, sabotaged or side-tracked. Rumanian reaction was well aware of the fact that the fundamental problems of the country were closely interconnected and that any step leading to the solution or partial solution of any one of them would necessarily affect all others.

At first the opposition to progressive measures was conducted in a defensive manner. The collection and dispatch of war material and booty to be delivered to the Soviet Union under the terms of the Armistice, the purge of the administration, the arrest of war criminals and the drafting of reforms were delayed or not carried out. On the other hand, resolute action often forced the government to make belated concessions. Thus the act legalising Rumanian trade unions was hurriedly passed after the Trades Unions Con-

gress had been convened and the establishment of the General Confederation of Labour, with some 700,000 members, became a certainty. Simultaneously preparations were made for an offensive against Rumania's progressive parties. Iron Guardists—aided by the reactionary wings of the Peasant and Liberal parties—police and military provoked and attacked workers, peasants and progressive leaders. Prime Minister General Radescu directed the well-prepared campaign and defended his action by denouncing the National Democratic Front as a minority group of extremists, terrorists and Communists who "have set out to kindle fire in the land and to drown it in blood." The climax of the crisis was reached when the military, placed beforehand in strategic positions, opened fire on a demonstration in Bucharest on February 24, and similar incidents occurred in several provincial towns.

Viewed in the perspective of Rumanian history these events were the result of a last desperate attempt to prevent Rumania from entering the path to democracy. Internationally they constituted an equally determined effort to produce a rift between the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States. Both aims of Rumanian and international reaction were defeated. The prompt intervention of the Allied Control Commission forced Radescu to withdraw his troops and the nation-wide protests, expressed in numerous demonstrations and resolutions, brought about his resignation.

The achievements of the Government of Democratic Concentration, formed on March 6, under the leader of the Ploughmen's Front, Dr. P. Groza, have greatly contributed to the consolidation of this democratic victory. Most of the cabinet ministers are members of the National Demo-

cratic Front, which includes the Ploughmen's Front, the Communist and Socialist parties, the Union of Patriots and Trade Unionists. These men are democrats "who give their efforts to the service of the people, who are ready to sacrifice even their lives, who work for the people—for peasants, workers and intellectuals, for all who with their labour and toil create the things which they have the first right to use." In addition, this government includes representatives of the progressive wing of the Peasant Party and dissident Liberals led by G. Tatarescu.

The first success of the Government of Democratic Concentration was the return of Northern Transylvania to Rumania. This had been provided for by the Armistice, but was delayed by armed bands of the National Peasant Party and the Iron Guard who terrorised the Hungarian minority after the area had been liberated and thereby forced the Soviet authorities to take it under their direct control in order to secure the rear of the Red Army. The former Rumanian governments could not be trusted with the maintenance of democratic order in the province. Dr. Groza's cabinet, however, has already given convincing proof of its intention and ability to do so. The Hungarian minority now enjoys equal rights with the Rumanians. Hungarian is the second official language of Transylvania and Radio Bucharest can be heard broadcasting in Hungarian.

The second truly historical achievement of the Government of Democratic Concentration is the passing of the Agrarian Law. It satisfies "one of the most ardent of our peasants' desires; the right to be master of the land which he works." With certain exceptions all estates over 125 acres are expropriated without compensation and given to the peasants, who pay for each acre with one year's

harvest of wheat or maize. In addition, agricultural machinery from the expropriated land belongs to state-owned district centres run by experts, who will hire out implements and help the peasants. The Agrarian Law strikes at the roots of Rumanian reaction. It eliminates the economic basis of the politically most harmful class and lays the foundation for the true emancipation of the peasantry.

Some of its results are already apparent. The old mistrust between town and country, between the government and the people, between "them" and "us" is vanishing. It was the workers who were the foremost advocates of the Agrarian Reform. Now they are contributing to the success of the Agrarian Law and the spring sowing campaign by working overtime in which they produce and repair agricultural machinery and by helping with the work on the land. The people trusts the Government, for it is a people's government, and the Government trusts the people. Thus "the application of the Land Reform is left to the ploughmen's committees elected in each village and district." Another important development is the creation of the Citizens' Guards who help the administration in maintaining order, combating the black market and in the arrest of war criminals. At the same time the army is also being made more democratic. The soldiers of the "Tudor Vladimirescu" division, composed of former prisoners of war in the Soviet Union who volunteered to fight against the Germans and who have distinguished themselves in the battle for Hungary, have now been incorporated into various units. In this way the traditionally anti-democratic state-apparatus is in process of

being transformed democratically into organs of power serving the people.

Parallel with these developments measures have been taken to strengthen Rumania's war effort. At least fourteen Rumanian divisions are fighting under Marshal Malinovsky's command. Their efforts are matched by the contributions in money and material to the front made by the population under the slogan "Everything for the front, everything for victory."

One of the most important tasks still to be accomplished is the purge and the punishment of war criminals. The Communist Minister of Justice, Patrascanu, has said: "A democratic Rumania cannot exist without the thorough punishment of war criminals." The preparations for the trial of "those who have so gravely sinned against Rumania and the Rumanian people" are well under way and their punishment will not be delayed for long. Other problems, such as the rehabilitation of the country's economic life and the fight against epidemics, which are being tackled with the generous help of the Soviet Union, will be solved in due course.

Much remains to be done. But the achievements of the last few weeks—weeks in which every day has counted for years—are truly inspiring. Rumania has definitely broken with the past. Its people has brought about fundamental changes in the economic, political and social life of the country. Friendly relations have been established with the Soviet Union, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and there are good prospects for the ending of the age old feud between Hungary and Rumania. Today Rumania is indeed one of the three pillars of Balkan Democracy.

Torture in Argentina*

by JOHN W. WHITE

THE Gestapo's barbarian use of torture and intimidation has been transplanted successfully to the Western Hemisphere. Since torture has always been an essential part of the Nazi technique, it should not be surprising, perhaps, that it accompanied totalitarian ideology to the Nazi-fascist bridgehead in South America. Most of us have assumed, however, when watching the less revolting techniques of Gestapo agents exposed in the movies, that nothing like that could happen here, and "here" includes those republics to the south which we have blessed with our good neighbourliness. But it *has* happened; both torture and intimidation have become flourishing state institutions in several Latin American republics, chief of them Argentina.

Torture is not a recent innovation in South America, of course. In its milder forms it has always been used by the police of all the republics, just as it is used today by the police in the United States. Italy and Germany, however, showed Latin America's fascists what really could be done to a naked prisoner if some serious thinking were given to the subject.

Argentina set its clock back nearly a century by the coup d'etat which overthrew President Castillo and installed the present military regime. The regime's brutal treatment of all political prisoners and its assassination of the more troublesome ones is a return to the days of the bloody tyrant Juan Manuel de Rosas, whose well-organised gang of cutthroats, called the Mazurka, would have had little to learn from the Gestapo of today.

After General Uriburu's pro-fascist revolution of September, 1930, the

Buenos Aires police department set up a so-called Special Section to rid the country of the "Communist menace." Under Uriburu, as under Farrell and Peron, anyone who dared oppose the government or even question the wisdom of any of its dictatorial decrees was a "Communist." In the 1930s, however, Argentina was not yet ready for Nazi-fascism, and Uriburu was ousted and fled to Europe. The Special Section persisted as one of several active groups which preserved and cultivated the virus of anti-democracy until it could be loosed on the country again in the pro-Nazi revolt which overthrew President Castillo in June, 1943.

Soon after the Farrell-Peron regime came to power, leading operatives of Himmler's Gestapo who had been assigned to Buenos Aires suggested that the Special Section be reorganised and "modernised." Under their expert guidance it was expanded from a city detective bureau into a great national organisation specialising in persecution and torture. It has set up concentration camps for political prisoners similar to those in Nazi Germany, tortured thousands of victims guilty of nothing more serious than belonging to labour unions or democratic political parties, killed or caused the death of hundreds of people bearing Jewish, Polish or Russian names, and caused the disappearance of other hundreds.

The Montevideo and Santiago branches of the Argentine underground movement have published from time to time the names of many of the political prisoners and described in detail the almost unbelievable brutality of their torture. Recently a letter was made public that had been written by prisoners confined in the cold, wet cellar of the city jail at La

Reprinted from the New York *Nation*,
March 3, 1945.

Plata, capital of the province of Buenos Aires. The letter declared that there were so many prisoners in the cellar that most of them had to remain on their feet while a few slept on the floor. They were given insufficient food of poor quality, and the physicians who were called in to attend the worst sufferers explained to the prisoners that they dared do no more than prescribe medicine.

Despite the revolting nature of most of the torture techniques now being used against political prisoners in Argentina, it seems advisable to make them known as evidence of the extent to which Nazi methods have already been established in the Western Hemisphere. The following account of some of these techniques has been sent to certain United Nations governments by their diplomatic agents at Buenos Aires and can be accepted as true, though perhaps incomplete.

The "electric spur" is the favourite instrument of the new school of native sadists who have been trained by Gestapo experts. It is a simple electric cable with several fine steel needles at the end. These electric needles are applied to the most sensitive parts of the naked body, such as the eyelids, the sexual organs, and the rectum. The torture usually is applied at two or more parts of the body simultaneously and has such terrific effect on the entire nervous system that it frequently produces insanity. In less extreme cases it paralyses the muscles and causes great painful swellings and deep sores. It is persistently reported that at least five thousand people in Argentina have been tortured with the electric spur.

A simpler but equally effective method is to jab long hatpins through the testicles. Another frequent "treatment" subjects political prisoners, women as well as men, to a third degree in which their naked bodies are burned with lighted cigarettes in an

effort to force them to answer questions the way the political police want them answered.

The "cup" is a device in the form of a funnel which is pressed against the body and from which the air is then pumped out. The resulting vacuum causes a huge swelling inside the cup and draws the blood to the surface, leaving a large black-and-blue sore. This device is used on prisoners known to be suffering from heart ailments. When applied in the region of the heart it aggravates the affection and often causes death from "heart failure."

The "bucket" is a huge vat filled with urine and excrement. The prisoner who is given this "treatment" is hung by his feet from the ceiling and then lowered until his head is submerged in the contents of the vat. This particular technique has the attraction of producing two forms of torture at the same time—semi-drowning in filth, and congestion of the brain from the downward flow of the blood.

One form of torture makes use of a familiar office appliance. In many European and South American countries letters, contracts, and other business documents are written in copying ink and preserved in duplicate by being put between the pages of a "copy-book" which is then squeezed between iron plates. The Argentine political police have found this office press a convenient method of smashing the fingers of prisoners who refuse to sign certain declarations.

The "slab" is a torture machine made of two huge sheets of steel. The victim is placed between the sheets, which are pressed together gradually until he suffers internal hemorrhages and vomits blood.

The whip and the rod have been seen in the movies. The long leather whip is usually dipped in water before the lashes are applied; the rod is made

of fine steel bars that cut into the flesh like knives.

Professional boxers are employed to beat up certain prisoners since they know how to produce the desired effect without leaving telltale wounds.

One highly refined form of mental torture drives the prisoner almost to the point of insanity without actually causing any physical hurt. The victim usually is awakened at two or three o'clock in the morning and told that he is to be executed by a firing squad. He is then "taken for a ride" in an automobile, accompanied by two or three guards armed with rifles and obviously members of the firing squad. Finally he is stood against a wall and the firing squad is lined up, but at the last minute he is relieved and taken back to his cell. (This is one of several techniques which are reported to have been used on the Bolivian tin-mine owner, Maurice Hochschild, after he was kidnapped by members of the young army officers' "lodge" in La Paz last year.)

Sometimes as a variation a prisoner who is to be released is "taken for a ride" in an automobile, accompanied by armed guards. When the automobile gets to a deserted region outside the city, the prisoner is told that he is at liberty. Being familiar with the famous *ley de fuga* by which prisoners are shot while supposedly trying to escape, he stands there afraid to move and under mental torture that may produce insanity.

La razzia is an importation from the Sicilian Black Hand societies and is used for intimidating the opposition, especially the working classes. Gangs of armed thugs terrorise entire neighbourhoods by breaking into and wrecking houses and by storming meetings of associations and trade unions, beating up those present and destroying the furniture and fixtures on the pretext that the meeting is

plotting against the government. Schools, libraries, and newspaper offices have been raided frequently, and on two occasions movie theatres in Buenos Aires were stormed while crowded with people. One of these was the Mitre Theatre in the working-class district of Avellaneda; the other was the Cine Arte Theatre in the downtown section of the city, where an American war picture was being shown. The *razzia* has also been used frequently in Dock Sud and Villa Crespo, two working men's districts outside the city of Buenos Aires.

Even when they are not tortured, political prisoners are demoralised and intimidated by being subjected to what is popularly known as *el mal trato*. Women of the working classes, especially wives and daughters who have refused to testify against their husbands and fathers, are put into cells with prostitutes and women criminals. They are not permitted visits from their families or from a lawyer; nor can they receive decent food from outside the jail.

The *mal trato* is applied to men prisoners in even worse form. If they are ill they usually are sent to regions where it is certain that their illness will get worse. They are given very poor food or deprived for entire days of anything to eat or drink. They receive no medical attention and may be put into cells with criminals of the lowest order.

So many lawyers have been punished for defending political prisoners in Argentina that it is practically impossible now for prisoners to find lawyers, except the ones who occasionally are assigned as "defence lawyers" by the government. Two of Argentina's most famous attorneys—Rodolfo Araoz Alfaro and Samuel Smerkin—are in concentration camps because they attempted to defend political prisoners.

Book Reviews

How slavery killed Greek science

Greek Science, its Meaning for Us (Thales to Aristotle) by Benjamin Farrington (Pelican Books, 9d).

THE STUDY of ancient history has one very great advantage over that of mediaeval or modern history. One man can read all the documents and thus form his own judgment with as good a right as anyone else. Hence a really authoritative work can be of quite small compass. Professor Farrington's book deals with the first third of the history of Greek science, in which the thought was most original. His heroes are the men of the rising bourgeoisie of the free city-states, who applied the ideas learned in handicrafts and trade to the universe, as did their successors in the free cities of Italy and the Netherlands 2,000 years later. His villains are Parmenides and particularly Plato.

He shows that as slavery developed, and handicrafts and even trade became vulgar and ignoble, it came to be believed that "pure" reason was a more powerful tool in understanding the universe than exact observation, let alone experiment. I consider that he has proved his point conclusively. No Marxist who wishes to understand the relation between science and society can possibly neglect this book.

I sincerely hope that it is only the first part of a general history of Greek science. Certainly it will have to be republished in a more durable form. I therefore propose a few criticisms of detail. I think the author has underestimated the Mesopotamian astronomers. Naburiannu and Kidinnu, the contemporaries of the men of whom he writes, were not particularly theological in their outlook, and their account of the sun's apparent motion round the earth as non-uniform motion in a circle was far more accurate than Ptolemy's. In fact, some of their numerical values were better than any calculated in Europe till about 1850. We can see why. As regards irrigation, ancient Iraq had a planned economy. And a planned economy was impossible without accurate

methods for surveying and for predicting the times of river floods.

I wonder whether Socrates has been quite fairly treated. In his later years he probably believed that the best approach to truth was by verbal arguments. But Aristophanes' *Clouds* strongly suggests that in middle life he was studying matter directly. It would be extremely interesting to know whether Professor Farrington thinks this was the case, and if so, whether Socrates' changed outlook was a reflection in his mind of the fall of Athenian democracy before Spartan militarism. And many readers would have welcomed a page on Aristotle's classification of animals. In one respect it was more dialectical than that of Linnaeus or even Lamarck, since it took account of differences in development, and not only of differences between the adult forms. Hence Aristotle did not regard the lizards and salamanders as closely related. Linnaeus fell into this trap, but I think Aristotle would have done the same had he followed his philosophy rather than his biological intuition.

Finally, if I had to state in three words what killed Greek science, I would say "Slavery and sodomy." Plato and other idealists were extremely tolerant of this latter aberration, which is fairly inevitable when women are so oppressed that they cannot be men's intellectual and aesthetic companions. Today it is common in literary circles, and rare among scientists. For it is a second-rate imitation, like the substitution of words for things, with which it is associated today, as it was in Athens. In Ionia, where Greek science originated, women had a good deal of independence. Queen Artemisia of Halicarnassos was a prominent quisling on the Persian side at the battle of Salamis. But Athenian women were confined to the harem when they were not slaves or prostitutes. And in the early stages of science women's knowledge of technique may be indispensable. Probably any very great step forward in civilisation demands the co-operation of the sexes. The partial revival of ancient science at a later date coincided with a rise in the position of women, even though slavery persisted.

Probably Professor Farrington can answer all these criticisms. But even if he

cannot, they do not appreciably detract from the value of a first-rate book, which should be widely read, not only by scientists, but by students of history, economics and philosophy.

J. B. S. HALDANE.

Soviet Foreign Policy

"MAXIM LITVINOFF" by Arthur Upham Pope—a very distinguished scholar in the art of ancient Iran—is a book* written with the best intentions. It aims at explaining Soviet foreign policy through the speeches and actions of one of the most distinguished Soviet diplomats and veteran members of the Bolshevik Party. By giving a connected account of that foreign policy, and illustrating it constantly with copious extracts from Litvinoff's speeches (though not enough from other documents), the book does a useful job. Undoubtedly it will introduce many previously uninformed readers to basic and elementary facts about the U.S.S.R.'s relations with other countries. It also gives an interesting story of Litvinoff's early life, making the most of the scanty material.

But unfortunately its misplaced attempts to be "human," bright and sensational—to imitate the technique of the foreign correspondents who put together their vivid but fleeting and entirely personal cables in the form of a best-seller—lead Mr. Pope's book constantly into blunders which seriously mar its value as a work of reference. Yet there is a crying need for such a work, and Mr. Pope could obviously have written one, if he were more critical in his treatment of his sources.

Sometimes it is the "human" effects, borrowed from doubtful gossip-writers, which mislead—like the pure fantasy of alleged talks between Litvinoff and Stalin or Molotoff; or the suggestions of anti-Soviet incidents at the League of Nations staged by—of all people—Marcel Hoden, one of the most consistent champions of collective security and friends of the U.S.S.R. there. Sometimes it is just bad history—like the assertion that Mr. Eden, in November, 1935 (the critical moment of the Italian war on Abyssinia), "came out immediately" for the stoppage

of oil exports to Italy—when the exact reverse would be nearer the truth; or that Stalin's speech at the Eighteenth Party Congress in March, 1939 (the one which warned the world that the Soviet Union would not pull other people's chestnuts for them out of the fire), was "published all over the world" when its virtual suppression in Great Britain, where its fullest publication mattered most, was one of the major crimes of the Munichites and their dupes.

Again, Mr. Pope finds himself unable to refrain (perhaps in a futile attempt to conciliate irreconcilable pro-fascists) from repeating the hoary old nonsense about some mythical "first few years" during which the Soviets were allegedly "committed to world revolution"—when the Soviet Government on the contrary did its utmost from its very first day to find means of peaceful coexistence with capitalist States, leaving revolution to those who alone could carry it out: the peoples. There are a number of other major and minor blunders which spoil what might have been an important contribution to popular education in foreign affairs.

VIATOR.

Independent Austria

The Rebirth of My Country by Ernest Fischer (Free Austrian Books, 1s, 24 pp.).

ERNEST FISCHER, now Minister of Education in the present provisional Government of Austria, is an outstanding figure of the Austrian Labour Movement. He was the best-known leader of the Left Social Democrats before the Dörfuss *coup d'état* in 1934. In the fight the workers of Austria then put up, the first armed uprising against Fascism, Ernest Fischer was a leader of the *Schutzbund*. After the defeat he joined the illegal Communist Party and continued his unceasing fight against Fascism both by organising resistance inside Austria and by writing. He is an eloquent speaker and a brilliant writer, using in a masterly way the Austrian idiom.

This pamphlet gives some of his broadcasts from Moscow to the Austrian people. Dealing with "Economic Unity"—the German post-war trick for Austria," he says:

* Secker and Warburg, 530 pp., 18s.

"We must—so these Gestapo creatures whisper—after the fall of Hitler maintain Austro-German economic unity in the name of progress, indeed, in the name of Socialism. . . . Only a madman or an enemy of the Austrian people could propose to us such an 'economic unity' of perpetual tribute.

"Austria as an independent State will be able to make her own Austrian contribution to European reconstruction. She will be able to adapt herself economically to those neighbouring States for which a great expansion is in store and to which our economy can far better adjust itself, above all, therefore, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia."

In another broadcast Fischer explodes the myth of "Austria's incapacity for separate existence," showing that she is far richer in raw materials than Switzerland and possesses the necessary developed industry and technique.

He refutes the, pro-German, arguments—the same arguments which were used at the time of the workers' struggle in 1934 as reasons against the uprising and as excuses for its failure.

The fatal error of the Austrian Social Democrats in 1934 was to call on the workers to wait, to hold their hand, that "we would strike at the decisive moment"; so that "at the decisive moment" they were caught unprepared. And Fischer pointed out that, just as in Yugoslavia the patriots did not fall as ready-trained guerillas from the sky, so in Austria they must cure themselves of this, "old Austrian ailment" of postponing fighting action, and must organise the small bodies of armed groups which already exist into a Liberation Army.

The Declaration on Austria of the Moscow Conference of November, 1943, and the general policy of the United Nations for the integrity and independence of small countries had put clearly before the Austrian people the way forward; the development of Austrian patriotism, no longer tied to the Greater Germany; the democratic unity of the independent Austrian people; and above all, the thorough organisation of armed resistance, joining forces with the liberation armies on the frontiers.

"The future fate of Austria will be determined beforehand by the weapons of the Austrian fighters for freedom, by armed resistance."

Today the achievement of Austrian liberation gives point to this pamphlet.

O.A.

Shorter Notice

Free Germans in the French Maquis. The Story of the Committee "Free Germany" in the West (I.N.G. Publications, 24 pp., 6d).

THE BOOKLET tells the dramatic story of the Anti-Nazi Germans on French soil who did their utmost to help speed the liberation of France. They fully justified the official recognition which the French High Command extended to them in July, 1944, by their unrelenting devotion to the Allied—and their own—anti-Nazi cause. It raises the question why the Free German Movement in Great Britain, which wants in the same way to play its part, should still be denied the opportunity to do so.

Publications Received

BOOKS

Industrial Relations Handbook. Ministry of Labour and National Service (H.M. Stationery Office 3s6d, 260 pp.).

Britain's Coal by Margot Heinemann (Gollancz, 6s, 198 pp.).

Rebuilding Britain—A Twenty Year Plan by Sir Ernest Simon (Gollancz, 6s, 256 pp.).

The Future of India by Penderel Moon (Pilot Press Ltd., 5s, 78 pp.).

Fabian Colonial Essays (Allen & Unwin Ltd., 8s6d, 262 pp.).

Speaking for Myself by Lady (Robert) Simon (The Pioneer Press, 2s6d, 112 pp.).

The Rehousing of Britain. Target for Tomorrow Series, No. 9 by John Madge (Pilot Press, 4s6d, 64 pp.).

Landsmen and Seafarers by Maurice Lovell (George G. Harrap, 7s6d, 64 pp.).

Beatrice Webb, 1858-1943 (O.U.P., 3s6d, 28 pp.).

A New Era. The Philadelphia Conference and the Future of the I.L.O. (I.L.O., 4s, 146 pp.).

Country Planning. A Study of Rural Problems by C. S. Orwin (O.U.P., 7s6d, 288 pp.).

The "VITAL ROLE" of LABOUR MONTHLY

Here is a letter from an airman serving in the Mediterranean:—

"This unity, which has brought us victory in Europe and holds great promise for the future, has not come about by chance. It had to be worked for and much has yet to be done to patch flaws here and there. LABOUR MONTHLY has played no small part in this struggle, and will, in the post-war years, play a vital role. No words of mine could possibly estimate the importance of your journal. The enclosed P.O. is an expression of my appreciation of your work."

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